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Sabah lose to Kedah in opening match

KOTA KINABALU: It was only by the slimmest of margins that Sabah lost 0-1 to host team, Kedah in the Group C opening match at the 2012 National Youth Cup Football Championship at Universiti Utara Malaysia in Sintok, yesterday.

"It was a huge let-down to eventually lose after controlling the match, especially throughout the second half.

"We did well despite having been reduced to 10 men after Jais Rulian was shown yellow in the 58th minute.

"Our goalie only had a few touches of the ball after the break and we had numerous chances to score but none of our attempts went through, although two shots came as close as striking the post and crossbar," said coach, Awang Sabtu Jamil, when contacted in Kedah.

He said: "The home team were quick to slip into rhythm".

"This is the difference when you have four months of preparation (referring to Kedah) as opposed to only two weeks," said the veteran coach.

According to Awang Sabtu, Kedah managed to score after Sabah's defenders failed to clear the ball from the danger zone.

The defeat meant that Awang Sabtu's boys will have to beat Sarawak in their other group match tomorrow to keep their hopes alive of advancing to the quarter-finals.